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members and one of said bottom facing panels and a second horizontal joint exists between another of said individual facing panel members and the crown member.

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Replace Claim 55 with the following:

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17<sup>55</sup> The freestanding panel assembly as recited in claim <sup>15</sup>~~52~~, wherein the crown member comprises an upper angled clamping surface, a lower angled clamping surface and an inclined mounting surface therebetween such that the lower angled clamping surface is generally spaced apart from the rigid frame assembly, the crown member adapted to engage a mounting bracket having a complimentary engagement surface for supporting office furniture accessories thereon.

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Please cancel claims 3-5, 14, 20-22, 42-43 and 53.

### REMARKS

Claims 1-18 and 52-56 are pending in the application; claims 17, 18, 55 and 50 have been allowed. Claims 1 and 52-54 stand rejected.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 5, including all the limitations of intervening claims 3 and 4. Dependent claim 17 has been rewritten to place it in independent form, including the limitations of independent claim 1 from which it originally depended.

Claim 52 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 53.

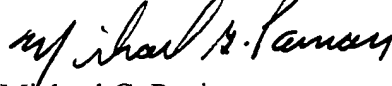
Claims 3-5, 14 and 53 have been cancelled.

It is respectfully submitted that the prior art neither teaches nor suggests the claimed invention. Since the application has been amended to place all of the independent claims in

allowable form, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a favorable action allowing the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned if he feels that such a conference would be of value in expediting the issuance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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## VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

### IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Amended) A panel assembly for a modular office furniture system, the panel assembly comprising:

a rigid frame assembly having a plurality of support brackets attached thereto;

[a facing panel assembly;

means for mounting the facing panel assembly to the rigid frame assembly whereby an unobstructed cavity is formed between the rigid frame assembly and the facing panel assembly]

a plurality of individual facing panel members having a front side, a mounting side, a top portion and a bottom portion, the mounting side including means for individually mounting each of said plurality of facing panel members to said support brackets such that individual cavities are formed between the rigid frame assembly and each of said plurality of facing panels; and

a crown member attached to a top portion of the rigid frame assembly, the crown member adapted to mount thereon office furniture accessories.

6. The panel assembly as recited in claim [5] 1, wherein the mounting side of said facing panels further comprises a first panel mounting clip attached to the top portion of the mounting side and a second panel mounting clip attached to the bottom portion of the mounting side.

7. The panel assembly as recited in claim [5] 1, wherein each of said plurality of support brackets further comprises top support brackets, bottom support brackets and intermediate support brackets.

11. The panel assembly as recited in claim [5] 1, wherein said plurality of facing panels are removably mounted to said rigid frame assembly.

15. The panel assembly as recited in claim [5] 1, wherein a plurality of individual facing panel members are mounted between the crown member and said bottom facing panels such that a first horizontal joint exists between one of said individual facing panel members and one of said bottom facing panels and a second horizontal joint exists between another of said individual facing panel members and the crown member.

17. (Twice Amended) [The panel assembly as recited in claim 1,] A panel assembly for a modular office furniture system, the panel assembly comprising:

a rigid frame assembly;

a facing panel assembly;

means for mounting the facing panel assembly to the rigid frame assembly whereby an unobstructed cavity is formed between the rigid frame assembly and the facing panel assembly;  
and

a crown member having means for supporting office furniture accessories thereon attached to a top portion of the rigid frame assembly, wherein said supporting means of the crown member comprises an upper angled clamping surface, a lower angled clamping surface and an inclined mounting surface therebetween such that the lower angled clamping surface is generally spaced apart from the rigid frame assembly[, the crown member adapted to engage a mounting bracket having a complimentary engagement surface including means for supporting office furniture accessories thereon].

52. (Amended) A freestanding panel assembly for a modular office furniture system, the panel assembly comprising:

a rigid frame assembly having a top portion and a bottom portion, the rigid frame assembly further comprised of:

- i) a plurality of vertical supports having opposing sides; and
- ii) a pair of bottom facing panels, one each of said bottom facing panels attached to the bottom portion on each of said opposing sides whereby a box beam structure is fabricated to form the rigid frame assembly;

a plurality of facing panels, each of said plurality of facing panels including an outward facing front side and an inward facing mounting side, a top portion and a bottom portion;

[means] a first panel mounting clip attached to the top portion of the mounting side and a second panel mounting clip attached to the bottom portion of the mounting side for individually mounting each of said plurality of facing panels to the rigid frame assembly such that a plurality of unobstructed cavities are formed between the rigid frame assembly and each of said plurality of facing panels; and

a crown member attached to the top portion of the rigid frame assembly.

54. The freestanding panel assembly as recited in claim [53] 52, wherein a plurality of individual facing panel members are mounted between the crown member and said bottom facing panels such that a first horizontal joint exists between one of said individual facing panel members and one of said bottom facing panels and a second horizontal joint exists between another of said individual facing panel members and the crown member.

55. The freestanding panel assembly as recited in claim [53] 52, wherein the crown member comprises an upper angled clamping surface, a lower angled clamping surface and an

inclined mounting surface therebetween such that the lower angled clamping surface is generally spaced apart from the rigid frame assembly, the crown member adapted to engage a mounting bracket having a complimentary engagement surface for supporting office furniture accessories thereon.

Please cancel claims 3-5, 14, 20-22, 42-43 and 53.